Dinanath's Studio

Dinanath's
STUDIO
poems • drawings

angarāg
Bhubaneswar

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Drawings are inspired by the paintings of the *Rasika Haravali* palm-leaf manuscript in the collection of the Museum Rietberg.

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Dinanath with Eberhard
Photo: Barbara Fischer

Dinanath Pathy is a painter, poet, writer and art historian, a Jawaharlal Nehru Fellow and Rietberg Awardee 2014. He was Secretary of the National Academy of Art, New Delhi. He is the Founder Principal of B.K. College of Art and Crafts, Bhubaneswar. He is presently Director, Alice Boner Institute Varanasi. He has collaborated and co-authored with Eberhard Fischer since 1978.

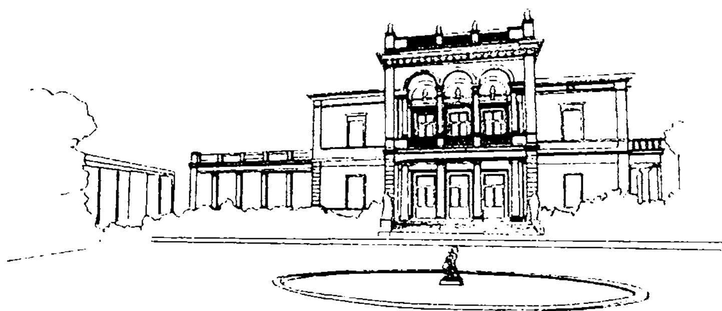
Ramanendra Mohapatra, the translator of Dinanath's poems taught English literature in several under-graduate and post-graduate colleges in Odisha. He is a writer and literary critic.

Museum Rietberg

The Rietberg Museum Zürich, Switzerland, displays Asian, African, American and Oceanian art. It is the only art museum of non-European cultures in Switzerland, In the early 1940s the city of Zürich purchased the Rieterpark and the Wesendonck Villa. In 1949 the Wesendonck Villa was selected, by referendum, to be rebuilt into a museum for the Baron Eduard von der Heydt's art collection, which he had donated to the city in 1945. This was carried out in 1951-52 under the architect Alfred Gradmann. The Rietberg Museum was opened on 24 May 1952. In 1976 the city acquired the Schönberg Villa, which faced demolition, and opened it in 1978 as an extension of the museum. Today the Villa is also home to an extensive non-lending library administrated by the museum. In 2007 a new building designed by Alfred Grazioli and Adolf Krischanitz was opened – the addition of this largely sbterranean building known as 'Smaragd' more than doubled the museum's exhibition space.

Rietberg Award

The award is given to a scholar of eminence in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Indian Art History. For the year 2014 Dr. Dinanath Pathy, a well known painter, writer, ethnologist and art curator from Odisha, India has been chosen for this honour. He succeeds two other laureates, Prof. B. N. Goswamy and Prof. Milo C. Beach , world-renowned scholars of Indian Art. Dr. Pathy is nominated for his life's work and his long standing collaboration with the Museum Rietberg. He will be honoured by Museum's Director Dr. Albert Lutz in the presence of his long-time friend and companion and the President of the Rietberg Society, Dr. Eberhard Fischer and the Head of South East Asian Art Collection, Dr. Johannes Beltz on Wednesday, June 4. The award is worth 10,000 CHF and is financed by private funds.





Publisher's Note

The "Studio" is Dinanath's make-believe "World" where he lives...runs and rests...and dreams and aspires. The "Studio" is full of breathing hues...calm and loud...wild and soothing; those have nourished him since his adolescence. The Studio is not a mere piece of poetry of the painter; she is epical; enshrines living countenances, characters, attitudes, impressions and experiences. She is wet and warm, bleeding fluids of emotions and passions, creating marks of presence, not to be washed off in the generations to come. The poet-painter may disappear but his Studio will speak for decades like the old banyan tree at the village entrance that welcomes one and all with her age-old tales. The Studio is a metaphor where the poet wears different identities.

The Studio nurtures each of his identities with care and passion. She consoles his agonies and despairs, soothes his wounded heart; balms his burns; calms his moments of wrath and fury; and never leaves him secluded. She never decays, never disappears and is never lost. She is the very essence of the poet who nests his finer wisdom up above all these worldly attachments of joys and sorrows; virtues and vices...success and failure.

A times, the "Studio" extends far beyond her palpable space and embraces other intimate universes; that could be an amplitude in Varanisi, one of the oldest living cities of the world or a hiatus on Oviga in Switzerland were Eberhard and Barbara own a domain of faith.

This anthology depicts the transcendental journey of the poet-painter where his "Studio" appears as a virtual reality.

Bhubaneswar Soubhagya Pathy



I

Ask him
Ask him Dear,
Do paintings talk?
Do they talk about the
intimate tales of love and woe?
pain, the tear-soaked hearts
of figures animated on the canvas?

Do paintings truly
resemble human beings?
or, do they resemble
their dreams?
like tangled tendrils
of wild *shiali* in the morning mist
or like fragile dew drops on
blades of grass.

Are paintings
unuttered poems;
where words are lost
in the meandering labyrinths of emotions,
speechless
unspoken agony of quietude?
where;
From the deep, dark depths
of the ocean
Eyes hoist pearls, diamonds, sapphires and shells

Is the painting
A human, alive
Or, a shadow?
Very much like a human being
yet, not one like him
Echo of a kiss
in unrequited love
only of unspeakable misery

What does its body really have?
The smiles of *Kanhei*
or *Radha's* ogle?
the doe's wails
or the gurgling music of the *Yamuna*?

Ask the painter
what magical charm do
his brushes have,
to make, moon beam bloom -
as flowers on river side
and transform everything
into surreality
Love and empathy;
The silence of the dark night
and the shower of stars from
the heavens into a celestial
interlude of light and shadow.

Ask him
How does he coalesse and yoke
into thick intimacy
the Oriole's yellow
with the blue of the sky
and the sombre-green of the forests?

What does he whisper
to his figures and figurines,
in dead of the night,
in lonesome moments?
His heart baring his body,
unmoved like the *Meru* and Himalayas
Unperturbed and stern
what are his words to the *Yamuna*
none can know nor hear
not even a word!!

Ask him,
why he makes them dance
in the scorching sun
in soothing golden furrows and folds
of the fields?

Why does he
mesmerise all of us
into gold statutes
and he makes us dance

his *Rasa* ?
unmindful of time and place
on the
grand road?

Do,
pain, grief and woe
belong to the artist alone?
Why does he imprison them
in his closeted self
flinging them into the abyss of oblivion,
Like a lady trying to shine in
perennial youth
Forgetful of her age!

In defiant confidence
the artist enslaves one and all
by his shapes, colour and charm
ever in the *Maya* of his paintings.

The artist
draws from the ocean,
the blue-secrets.
from the air,
the ripples and the rare incense,
using his mesmerising power.

Time and Death,
the Sun and the Moon,
the planets and stars
all become his own'
intimately his own!

Ask him Dear
If my love is
like the clear stream
my navel has the smell of
kasturi,
my hair is adorned with the *parijata* flowers

Could he
with his transmuting touch
fill my life
with the fragance of a
myriad worlds?



II

You were
on your way... home
my body en-tranced
like a hymn echoed on the East-bank
of the age old city.

My eyes fixed on the sky,
meditating on the colourful emptiness,
the rippled-pond
and your return;
counting my panting breaths.

The evening sky;
worded and pigmented.
The unattached Sun
soon to set.

On the precinct of the temple,
Shiva dances
dressed in a dark skirt with stripes
of tiger-yellow, *linga* erectus,
strong fumes of *ganja* abound
to the beats of an engaging-*tandava*

You looked so pale and lustreless
like my mother's age-old
tassar prayer sari.
What a difference !

One could mark it
from the fading shadow of time and age
under your benign eyes.
the tattoos of love
had engulfed your cheeks, fore-head
and your trembling eye-lids.

The smile had perished
from the lips
the flowers had faded
and were odourless on the tresses
water trickled from the leaves
like a dirge.

III

You descended
in small and slow steps;
down the stairs of Time,
crossing the threshold of memory,
and arriving at the dusky evening
of consciousness.

The humid and sultry
moments of life;
the honeyed moments of love;
the jest and lust of living
reflected the moth in the flame
to my thoughtful mind.

I remembered
the image of the banyan
at the pond;
the descending steps
on the bathing-ghat,
from the *tulsi altar*
to the lotus tangles
of the dark depths of the abyss.

My body
a forlorn temple
surrounded by the deep blue ocean,
with the fear of crocodiles and sharks,
snakes poisonous and spirits
heralding death every moment.

I am *Mandar* mountain
My pinnacle the plaited sky
On my body is the coils of *Vasuki*
shining ever.

The nights and the days
are fragrant with the smell of the soil
the sombre beckonings of dawn
at the end of the mystical nightly charm.

IV

I feel
you are on your
way home from work
On your tired face
and fatigued body
is evident a cool calm beauty.

I know,
you will surely come
with the swan's lyrical gait
in the musical grace of the tired waves,
and,
shoals of fish would welcome you
with flickering little lamps in their
hands.

I have spread out,
for you,
a silk-mat;
a gossamer-screen, transparent;
a painted canopy of a sky
and laid out a train of
unending beautiful nights!

Strewn are flowers of diamond
on a stretch of your road
All the fanfare and pomp
with the melody of the *shehnai*
and the procession,

reverberating, the
world of my dreams,
the listless ends of the city
In it all,
are lost *krushnachuda*, cactus
and the forlorn horizon

Who created
this ultimate journey?
None had heard
of the flower in
the 'mythical tree'!
with roots shooting into the sky
and branches growing below.

Lotus - eyed Lakshmi!
resplendent, complete, fulfilled!
Bless me with a drop of
your fulfilling love
Let my eyes of consciousness
open to divinity and light!

V

I don't know,
what time of night is now!
I feel so listless and empty!
inside and out
nothing interests me now!

Darkness reveals
the cosmic space
cool breeze, floating clouds.
the variegated inner self
the essence of divinity, the altar,
fumes, lamps and offerings in prayer.

The sun warmed morning dew
the thick languid sal-forest
the 'crow-eyed' still waters
the distant wails of a princess lost.

The body belongs to no one.
The temple is not of gods
They all stretch
from this earth to the sky above.

Where is the end
to a search?
the street terminates in the cremation ground.
At the end of the village
is the potter's workshop.
He moulds the toys of clay.

The trails of the robe,
smell of desire, attachment,
the scent of sweat, turmeric
and sandal paste pervade the air.
On the wings of the bird is stuck
the Sun,
like stains of blood.

When famine comes
the king is dead in war.
The beggar loses a queen.
The *Vindhya* totters
and
the sea swells
crossing the shore.

One remembers
at odd moments,
the loss of a diamond ring.
One searches
the *Mahendra* mountain
in the guts of the python!

One doesn't get
what one wants.
The desire to have
doesn't ebb!
The half-clad tummy
remains desperate in empathy!

This is life!
Within reach is the lotus!
yet, it moves away,
to the unreachable – distant waters.
The *seven-hooded* raises its head
and the smell of the deadly poison fills the air.

The world around appears hazy,
rows of tall blue palms,
the transparent white glass window-panes
and the trickling drops of water!

In the village lanes
in the flood-waters
paper-boats caught in a vortex.
The colour of lost childhood –
all appear again in the darkness.

In the third quarter of night
the flames leap out from the *third eye* of Shiva
the heat waves come rolling
bringing into shape
the blood boiling tremors of *tandava*.

The music of the night
the staccato rhythm of the *damaru*
echoes on the body of Parvati
the bellowing calls of *Nandi*, the bull!

The blood boils,
The *Ganges* flows
from the corners of the finger nail
semen in droplets
shines on the spider's net.

Turmeric-smeared body
turns into an image of gold
Deep-expectant, night.
Rain drenched thached roof
the dishevelled hair of *Rati*
Madana's flower-bow fades.
The bee imprisoned in the pollen whorl,
like the last line of a prayer.

Sparks of fire from the ocean,
leaping flames go haywire;
the birth of another world in progress
from the intimacy of this deep night!

VI

That day,
on my way back
from the battle;
My body with wounds
had etherised my soul;
fermenting me,
my existence,
my manhood.

Bleeding was perhaps
not enough!
In a cold war
everything is icy cold
body, mind,
consciousness and the supra-conscious.
The feel of death
lifeless, dead cold!

I yearned,
a word or two
from someone, near and dear
a bit of sympathy, a pat on the back
from someone in loving care.

I don't know,
whether the time was right
or ominous.
In a fix at the cross-roads.
Where should one step forward?

Few have
this opportunity.
At such an ominous moment
to come face to face
with one's soul
and identify a myriad
stray ordinary men and women!

Only when the seed pierce
the soil
the seedling germinate!
Only when water be soaked by the earth
shall the stream flow!
Only when, grief permeates the mind
shall one visualize the scene
on the other bank!
When the body gets consumed!
shall gold shine in the ashes.

Just at this juncture
of time,
someone's warm hand
touched my shoulder
and spoke in whispers soft,
"I am still alive.
Don't you know!"

I looked behind,
a woman I saw,
all divine
giving a bright smile
resplendent in love and light
full-bosomed of Ambrosia,
poised and erect on
the golden lotus.

I saw;
everything turn into beams of light.
The brightness of a thousand suns.
Everywhere the shower of light
sky and the air
the earth and the heaven
Everything was transformed
into the glowing Sun!

How could I have questioned
All that was happening before me?
My throat was parched,
My voice choked,
slowly I was transformed into
an image of gold?



VII

In the morning,
your eyes still sleep-lorn;
you asked,
"Do you see, anything?
Can you realize anything?
Does this world matter to you?"

"Or is it only your world alone that matter?
of figures, shapes and colours that flatter
and intoxicate you?"
You have turned me into a painting.
You thought as if it were beyond
the reach of time!
you thought
as if the dreams won't fade
from the passion-kissed lips
of *Konark*."

See, how the Sun,
covers your whole body!
Why do you look so pale!
Am I only a painted self?
Don't think I am only a body!
Just not a body, alone.
Never were I so.
Never a body alone!

Sometimes,
I have pierced your sky
And have entered like a comet
into you, from one emptiness
Into another void.

We were in the dak-bunglow
Two days of rented-residence!
Like everything
This, too, was another uncertainty!
A momentary existence,
Then no more!
A bubble-like-life!
Ephemeral!

The night was spent,
spent in the blueness of Chilika
Rolling dreams on
Chilika's expansive self
from our room to
the distant horizon
From the body to the beyond.

The Sun
kissed your body
moving away from mine.
It felt like another sun-rise!
You turned into gold.
ecstatic like the waves.

Then everything was
the vast expanse of the blue Chilika
Golden Chilika, Dream-drenched-Chilika
Only a vast sun-bright-empire!

Wings sprouted from my body
I turned into a swan
floating in the waters of Chilika.
I was amazed
at this queer transformation
the golden water ruffled,
the shoals of gold-fish
in their eyes inebriated
repeated the same question,
"Do you see anyting?
Can you realize?
Do you bring to your mind
The happenings of
this work – a day mundane world?"



VIII

Outside,
the thick silence of the dark night.
From the wombs
of the pregnant clouds
oozed the incessant rain.
Water was everywhere
it seemed *pralaya* was imminent!

I was in my studio.
conscious, awake,
moulding a form.
The form of
the love-lorn Radha
her eyes, nose, lips and
breasts, thighs and
her opulent torso.
I was painting her
possessed and mesmerised.
This is how
a painting entices you,
it binds you with
her embrace.
Immobilises and makes you
drunk
with its power,
beauty and grace!

She did not sleep.
not a wink.
In utter desperation

she banged her head,
in the nearby room.
Hissing in jealousy,
Like a seven-hooded-cobra,
boiling in pent-up anger,
about to spill,
fuming in frothful force.

She crashed into my room,
like a landslide from the hill-top above
crashing into the human habitation
with a bang.
The artist's studio
shook
the artist and Radha within.

In spite of me,
how dare you draw,
women in nudes!
How dare you
steal their coyness and honour!
How dare you
fantasise and desire
their physical form
in my presence!

Then the cataclysm
in the artist's studio

Radha withdrew
covering her bright yellow body
Really,
how shameful is to un-robe one self!

I said:
"You have captivated me
from the day I first met you.
my mind, my life everything
you have enveloped my
creative consciousness from the beginning.
All my paintings are only your
prototypes and reflections!"

See them;
They are like you,
only you,
Your face, body, eyes and ears.
Who do you
identify with Radha?
The other woman?
You are my Radha
My lady love.
The fount of my inspiration
The only inspiration and
reflection of my creative self
you are my mother
The ensconced goddess
of my painting - studio!

The artist moulds a form,
adorns it with colour and beauty
anoints it with his dreams and fantasies
decks it with his joy and pain
and lives with its body and form
for aeons to come.
The relationship becomes colourful
attaching himself to life here
and here-after with the
language and rhythms of a painting.

The sky comes
within reach,
with it the earth and the air,
the wilderness pours out
into his studio!

He is hypnotised and possessed!
like a limpid brook.
Fluid and unfettered,
pulsating with the power
of emotions
He wanted to flow out
as a painting in the stream of time.

She searched for Radha
How could Radha come?
It was only a painting

reclining against the wall,
resplendent in the glow of colours
and beauty!

Outside:
Still the thick darkness of the night!
Still the silence!
Still the incessant trickle,
Still the unstoppable rain!



Glossary

I

Shiali - a kind of wild creeper which grows in jungle.
Kanhei - Krishna
Meru - mythical mountain
Yamuna - river associated with tryst of Krishna, Radha and cowherd women.
Rasa - the circular dance performed by Krishna, Radha and cowherd women.
Maya - the cause of delusion
Kasturi - musk
Parijata - mythical flower of the heaven

II

Linga - male insignia
Ganja - hashish, narcotic

III

Tulasi altar - pedestal for basil plant
Mandara - which was used as a churning rod to churn the ocean by gods and demons.
Vasuki - the mythical serpent who holds the earth on its head.

IV

Shehnai - blowing musical instrument
Krushnachuda - a flowering tree

V

Sal - a tall tree
Tandava - cosmic dance of Shiva
Damaru - hand held drum
Vindhya - mountain range that divides Indian land mass into north and south.
Rati - goddess of love
Madana - god of love

VII

Chilika - one of the largest brackish salt water lake in Asia

VIII

Pralaya - deluge
Radha - soul mate of Krishna



Books with Dr. Eberhard Fischer

In the Absence of Jagannatha
The Anasara Paintings Replacing the Jagannatha Icon in Puri and South Orissa, India,
Niyogi Books, 2012

Gitagovinda
Ein illustriertes Palmblattmanuskript aus Orissa, Indien im, Museum Rietberg Zurich, Switzerland 2008.

Amorous Delight
The Amarushataka Palm Leaf Manuscript Illustrated by the Master of Sharanakula (Orissa, India).
Museum, Rietberg Zurich, 2006.

Mural for Goddesses and Gods
The Tradition of Osakothi Ritual Painting in Orissa. India, Museum Rietberg Zurich. Switzerland: in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. New Delhi, 1996.

Die Perlenkette Dem Geliebten
Elf illustrierte Palmblater zur Rasika Haravali Romanze des Dichters Upendra Bhanja von Orissa, Indien. Museum Rietberg. Zurich. Switzerland. 1990.

Gita Sera Danseuse
Illustrated Children's Book on Odissi Dance (with Mrs. Barbara Fischer) in several European and Indian languages.
UNICEF. Switzerland. 1986.

Swissair Gazette
Special Issue on Odisha, 1985.

Gita und hir Dorf in Indien
Illustrated Children's Book
(with Mrs. Barbara Fischer) in German. Dutch.
Swedish and Japanese Languages, 1983
Jugenddienst Verlag, Germany.

Orissa: Kunst und Kultur-in Nordost Indien
(with Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra)
Museum Rietberg. Zurich. Switzerland. 1980.

Research Articles

"Gitagovinda Inscribed Ikat-Textiles from Orissa" in *Journal of the Orissa Research Society*, Vol. 1, No. 2, April 1982, Bhubaneswar.

"The Artatrana Chautisa - Illustrations by Raghunath Prusti: an Oriya palm-leaf Manuscript of Prayer by a 19th century Painter in *Indian Painting, Essays in honour of Karl J. Khandalavala*, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 1995.

"Drawings for the Renewal of Murals, Notes on Documents for Murals of the Kalika Temple near Jayapur in the Koraput District, Orissa (India): *in Artibus Asiae*, Vol. LXII, No. 1.2002.

"Gitagovinda - Inscribed Textiles" in *Imaging Odisha*, Vol. 2, Prafulla, Odisha, 2013.

"Ramayana - Two Kalamkar Textiles" in *Imaging Odisha*, Vol. 2, Prafulla, Odisha, 2013.

"A Vrindavati Scroll Fragment, Drawings by Markanda Mahapatra, a chitrakara of Jayapur, Koraput District (South Odisha). India" in *Themes, Histories, Interpretations, Indian Painting, Essays in Honour of B.N. Goswamy*, Mapin Publishing, 2013.

Solo Exhibitions at the Museum Rietberg

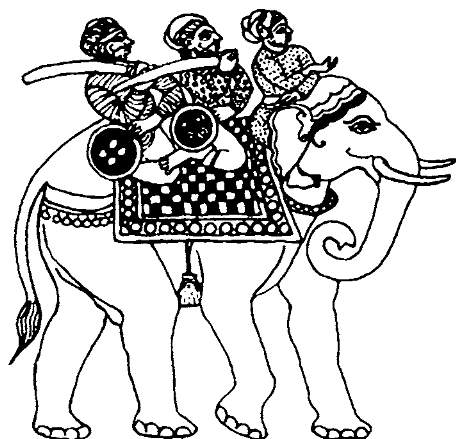
Gita and her Village in India, Water colour paintings, 1983.

Faces Known and Unknown, Graphic prints, 1992.

Ganga to Ganges, Acrylic paintings, 2002.

Documentary Films with Eberhard and Barbara Fischer

Pata Painting, 1978
Ganjapa, 1978
Gotipua, 1978
Terracotta Horse, 1978



Rietberg Award 2014

Acceptance Speech

4th June, Museum Rietberg Zurich, Switzerland.

[Opening Salutations] Dear Dr. Albert Lutz, Director of the Museum Rietberg, Dr. Johannes Beltz, Curator of the South East Asian Arts, Museum Colleagues, Dr. Eberhard Fischer, President of the Rietberg Society, Honourable members of the society, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today indeed is a memorable day in my life as the coveted Rietberg Award is conferred on me. It is an emotional moment. This recognition places me in the league of internationally recognized scholars Prof. B.N. Goswamy and Prof. Milo C. Beach,. This has been possible because of an enlightened and visionary person whom I had met for the first time in Bhubaneswar way back in 1978 in connection with setting up an exhibition on the art and culture of Odisha. By a strange coincidence a bond of friendship was then forged that has only kept growing with time. These thirty six years were eventful in my life, eventful in more ways than one. This magnanimous person opened for me the golden gates for a scholarly world and today learned people consider us as one among five or six scholars world-over who work on Odishan painting. I fondly remember the words of encouragement Dr Stella Kramrisch and Dr. Joanna

Williams wrote in praise of our Orissa catalogue published by the Rietberg Museum in 1980. She described it as a finely documented and researched work of regional art history.

This wonderful person is none other than Eberhard Fischer who with his dear wife Barbara has stood by me as a solid rock, supporting me to sail through the strife and tribulations of my life. Today, I stand before you in all smiles largely because of him. During these years, the Museum Rietberg has also endearingly accepted me as one of its staff members. I have had the privilege of watching this fantastic institution grow from practically a one man army, I remember late Prof. Helmut Brinker,into a truly international museum with enviable works of art and meaningful publications. I am delighted to have had a tiny part of this growth. My role is somewhat akin to the legendry squirrel who helped Lord Rama the king of Ayodhya in exile, to build abridge across the ocean connecting the Indian peninsula to SriLanka by dusting off the sand particles from its body.

Year after year I have walked on the meandering path through this beautiful park leading to the portals of the museum with pride and confidence as a friend of the Director. This park has an enduring charm for me. Kurfirstenstrasse -1, my residence in Zurich was at the edge of the park.I discovered when I first arrived here, I was then almost lost and somehow found myself by the benevolence of a Swiss cab driver by

chance. I had thought that the Director of the museum lived in one of the houses allotted to him by the Zurich municipality. The reality in all these years has not changed much. I was convinced that the Director was such a privileged person that he had a park and a museum attached to his residence. Now Winterthur house is at the other end of a 'twin city' miraculously attached with a wild park and a museum. Both are aesthetically distant as Emperor Saha Jahan's Taj Mahal across the river Yamuna.

At the home front in Odisha, jealousy apart, we have several admirers who looked anxiously for new books authored by Fischer-Pathy. Could you imagine I often carry Rietberg publications to show them to my friends like a child who displays newly acquired toys. Our Rietberg Books – Artibus Asiae publications are a treat, its enchanting aroma, captivating design, excellent visuals and highly organized texts are a world by itself that needs to be explored prudently. At a national seminar recently organized by the Department of English of Utkal University I was invited to speak on "Book as a work of Art". The organizers had asked me to bring my books to display as examples. Rietberg books like the *Rasika Haravali*, *Amaru Shataka* and the *Gitagovinda* were appreciated verily as works of art by the professors and students alike. My burden of making an elaborate speech was greatly lessened.

During these years, with the support I have received, I have been able to develop a kind of writing, a new

genre the critics say in which I pour in my experiences as an artist. This has added a new dimension to Odia literature, a domain built differently by treating art history as literature. This is intended to create a wider readership for art that would otherwise shy away from formidable looking well-researched books.

I have published more than twenty such books in Odia comprising art-fiction, stories, travelogues, autobiographies, poems and essays. Although a straight-cut theory of 'cause and effect' may not be easy to figure out, nevertheless an avowed and sensitive reader never misses the Swiss touch in-between the lines. If research is meant to search again, these writings paved the way for a new understanding of art. To cite a few, my article with Eberhard on "Drawings for the Renewal of Murals" finds an echo in my art-fiction *Renewal*. Similarly our experiences of working on the book *Amorous Delight* find reflected in my art fiction *Raga Ranga Ananga (Melody Colour Cupid)*. My writing on Alice Boner's philosophy on Indian Art is obvious in the *Descends of Ganga*, another fiction, probably the only fiction on Varanasi in Odia language.

I am basically an artist who sparingly wrote on art before I met Eberhard. This meeting and subsequent collaborations sharpened my perception as I realized the significant role of art-history in enhancing visibility to a wider world. Being based in Odisha and rooted to its cultural ethos, my role as a cultural

historian assumed significance, I belong to the Eberhard School of research which is based on intense field studies. Our *guru* in Indian painting is B.N. Goswamy. I have understood, that to be an art historian, one has to write about what people normally fail to see in a painting, a work of art in general. It needs to provide a different dimension, a new vision which has not been touched upon, a viewpoint that predecessors have not spoken of.

Research is a faith, an unfailing faith in the potential of art as well as on one's own potential which helps to bring out your best analysis and thought. It is an expression of love for the artistic heritage of a place and its people which otherwise would have been lost in the oblivion. When I re-read our jointly authored books, I often meet a number of artists such as, painters, sculptors, scribes, potters and the like who are dead and gone but are lurking through the pages. I meet Raghunath Prusti, Michha Patajoshi, Brajanath Badajena, Prakash Mahapatra, Hari Panda and many more who have enriched Odishan art tradition. When I read the books yet again or research into them it provides immense satisfaction for which reason it often becomes an addiction too. You cannot but write, paint, publish books and organize exhibitions. At times you feel that you are a *nimitta matra* (a mere tool at the hands of an invisible force).

Painting, writing and research stem from the same creative urge. The efforts are compatible and each

endeavor is an extension of the self and with it a journey, a juggle.

In India it is said writing on art is not financially rewarding because paintings fetch enormous prices. But if you can balance between art making and writing about it, you do not starve. Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship and Rietberg Award rarely comes to people who only paint.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank Dr. Lutz, Dr. Beltz, Dr. Fischer, Mrs. Fischer and all the staff members of the Museum and members of the Rietberg Society who have considered me worthy of the Rietberg Award. I would place on record how grateful I am to all of you.

The following sentences could be mine as well –

"I hope I will be forgiven if I am unable to detach myself enough and sometimes praise the merits of this beautiful museum too much; after all I have to stand up for it every day. The American reader may think that I consider it to be one of the new wonders of the world, a Swiss Metropolitan Museum as it were. Well, the Rietberg Museum is the place where I work, and I do like it- and I also very much appreciate being able to live in cosmopolitan Zurich. Because I am not Swiss, I have ever since my childhood considered everything Swiss to be superb, better, more accurate and polished, and Switzerland to be a European country of manifold possibilities."

(Eberhard Fischer in *Treasures from the Rietberg Museum*, the catalogue of an exhibition shown in Asia House Gallery in the spring of 1980 as an activity of The Asia Society to further understanding between the peoples of the United States and Asia.)

Dinanath Pathy

aṅgarāg



Angarag's logo *Navanarikunjara* is an elephant composed of nine *gopis*, cowherd women in a mutually interlocked position with Krishna riding as Madana, the God of love.

Also read in **aṅgarāg**

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